Monday

Dearest donkeysweet,

Did you understand that when I wrote it was my best book I merely meant because all the pages were empty? A joke, a feeble joke: but then it might get round through Jack Squire, through Hugh Walpole to Gosse: seriously ~~you & so~~ such are your friends. These things make me shiver like a fish on a hook about 2 A.M. So I am writing.

Then, Selands: ~~etc~~

Oxford is May 18th & I've

written to take rooms at the
Mitre.
And shall I see you before?
And where does one buy a
black coat? I have to
broadcast,
& think
it
should be
done in
broad
cloth.

NYPL

V.W.

Virginia
(I forgot)

HAMILL + BARKER 2/5/62

Friday. 52 Tavistock Square.

Darling Vita,

What a generous woman you are! Your letter has just come, & I must answer it, though in a chaos. (Nelly returning: her doctor: her friends: her diet &c) I was honest though in thinking you wouldn't care for the Lighthouse: too psychological: too many personal relationships, I think. (This is said not of the dummy copy) The dinner party the best thing I ever wrote: the one thing that I think justifies my faults as a writer: this damned 'method'! Because I dont think one could have reached those particular emotions in any other way. I was doubtful about *Time Passes*. It was written in the gloom of the Strike: then I re-wrote it: then I thought it impossible as piece [prose] / I thought you could have I dont know wanted it as

if I'm like Mrs Ramsay: as my mother died when
I was 13 probably it is ~~is~~ a child's view of her:
but I have some sentimental delight in thinking
that you like her. She has haunted me: but
then so did that old wretch my father:
Do you think it sentimental? Do you think
it irreverent about him? I should like to
know. I was more like him than her, I
think; & therefore more critical: but he was an
adorable man, & somehow, tremendous.
Look here, dearest creature, the young
men have taken us rooms together at the
Clarendon before getting my letter: also they
want us to dine ~~&~~ with them just at
7: So we must get there about 6. I
daresay train is simplest. Let me know
what suits you. I'm rather bothered about
my paper; it might suit; it may be dull. Ask
Harold whether one can say that God

does not exist to ~~an~~ Oxford undergraduate? as one comes to Cambridge. Also would you please, please please send me that story you said you had almost ready? This is most important, as Lord Olivier is not alone enough to support the story series. Couldn't you bring it with you on Wednesday?

But why do you think me "lonely"? Lovely I understand: not altogether, lonely.

Yes, it's an immense relief that you like it; I had been sure you wouldn't. I have so many more books in my head that I should be unhappy to think the whole progeny was doomed to drive us further asunder. The next will be better than this I think. An old creature writes to say that all my fauna & flora of the Hebrides is totally inaccurate. Dear me! what's to

be done about it?

So dearest, tram; Wednesday, to arrive for dinner. I rushed into a whore's shop in Leicester Sqre & bought a coat

Come here anytime you like:

Tell Harold we want him to come & dine with us, & I see some hope now of getting dinner soon. Will he?

The Story! the story!

Yr

V.

(oh I forgot —
Virginia Woolf)

One needn't dress for the young men, need one? No.

Sunday.

All right, dearest Donkey. I will be ~~at~~ outside the place where one buys tickets at Paddington at ~~4~~ 4.35 on Wednesday, carrying a neat bag. Otherwise slightly shabby, but distinguished. Suddenly it strikes me that its all great nonsense your coming — except that I shall enjoy it. The dinner, the paper — what a bore for you! However in the slices of time left us, the scraps & parings, we may make hay. Herbert Fisher has asked me to stay. But Dreyberg wants us to lunch. No, I say — How did the Colefaxes go? a little damp, I should guess. D'you know the first time I met her she struck me so hard & bright I compared her to artificial cherries on a Servants hat — nor can I ever quite obliterate it.

Yr

Virginia in haste.

Yes, bring the story: but if you dont want to come say so like a man — Ring up.

I did much want to tell you a secret, was to be given a medal by Drinkwater. Thats what cut me to the quick. Whats a Lighthouse of Drinkwater dont approve? Eh? Virginia

We go on Tuesday

52 Tavistock Square,
London,
W.C.1.

Telephone: Museum 2621

Sunday.

Oh I envied Raymond driving off with you through the hop gardens to hear the nightingales— It was a great joy seeing you; & if you would send me one line daily I would go on building you up. ~~Tue~~ I am a great adept at this game. I am lying under a blue & purple forest, the lupins you brought. Enormous trees they look like, & I am a little rabbit running about among the roots. Its odd how being ill even like this splits one up into several different people. Heres my brain now quite bright, but purely critical. It can read; it can understand; but if I ask it to write a book it merely gapes. How does one write a book? I cant conceive. Its infinitely modest therefore,—my brain at this moment. Then my body— Oh, it says, able to write books: thats another person. No, my body is a grey mare, trotting along a white road. We go along

quite evenly for a time like this ... suddenly she jumps a gate ... ∧ ... This is my heart missing a beat & making a jump at the next one. I rather like the grey mare jumping, provided she doesn't do it too often. I have walked round the Square, but I much prefer lying on my chair under the blue & purple forest.

I've seen no one, except Nessa, who met Ottoline in Wigmore Street the first day she came back, & had an indecent proposal made her on the telephone by an unknown man – that's London, she said. She is going to wear earrings. I say, Vita, it was good of you to come. And you'll come on Friday, & you'll write? Want you ? You make such a figure in this forest: coming out of a glade; yellow; golden.

The Seafarers Educational Society has bought 2 copies of the Lighthouse. It's an awful thought that the merchant service will be taught navigation by me: & the proper use of foghorns & cylinders. It's a compliment never paid to your poets. I think I deserve it. The trouble I took with that lighthouse! It's going to be reprinted. Do send me any corrections: I'm rather pleased. Not very. But then the only thing

52 Tavistock Sq^re.

<u>Health</u>:

Better but not quite right yet—I mean I get the jumping pulse—pain if I do anything: Cant write sense. Will you please be rather strict for a time? Its so easy, with this damned disease, to start a succession of little illnesses,—finally be sent to bed for 6 weeks, as happened last time. I expect to be perfectly well by Sunday, after a few days at Rodmell. All I pray is that you will not encourage me to excitement, even so: 2 you wont say I'm a mollycoddle

will you? Life in London is difficult: Ottoline, Clive, & so on. ~~Jim~~ Now this is enough about health. We need not mention it again I hope.

<u>Sofa</u>: Yes. But the difficulty is that few decent sofas can get up our stairs. I sacrificed my old one for that reason.

<u>Hawthornden</u>

Yes: the 16th. Damn Raymond. I'd been planning a NYPL party here — all the lights of London to meet you — & only waited to be steadier on my feet to ask you. I'm dining with Clive on the 17th "to celebrate the success of Fugitive Pieces".

<u>Long Barn.</u>

I'd like 3 days doing nothing but eat & sleep at Long Barn more than anything. An occasional kiss on waking & between meals.

<u>Rodmell</u>. You'll come Friday, honey, won't you?

Virginia

Monks House
Sunday

Yes, honey, do come on Tuesday. Only stay longer than they do, whatever happens. I don't like seeing you between the legs & over the heads of Logans & Hendersons. I think it would be a tactful thing on your part if you asked L. to come to Long Barn in person. He probably thinks you don't want him so: being a modest man. A very stormy week end, but infinitely lovely on the marshes. D'you remember the birds that ventriloquate?—They're swarming—redshanks, I think. And you entertaining Hugh, & Eleanor! Eleanor will say "Might I ... Mrs Nicolson?" You'll take her. "Its my miscarriage" she'll say coming out. "I've had six". And then, having thought youngly [illegible], she'll settle in for another two or three hours, & tell you the whole story.

I think the Eclipse affair is all right. But I'll know for certain on Monday.

Many thanks for Leigh's pat. I feel like a nice puppy wandering about under a dinner table, & now & then you give it a titbit off your own plate.

Just off to London.